

VZCZCXRO1568
RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHRN
DE RUEHMR #0024 0181507
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 181507Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY MASERU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2545
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHMR/AMEMBASSY MASERU 2891

UNCLAS MASERU 000024

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT ALSO FOR AF/S

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [LT](#)

SUBJECT: LESOTHO REQUESTS USG OBSERVER MISSION FOR NATIONAL ELECTIONS

REF: MASERU 605 AND PREVIOUS

¶1. This is an action request. Please see para 5.

¶2. SUMMARY. On January 11, Embassy Maseru received a diplomatic note from Lesotho's Ministry of Foreign Affairs formally announcing the date of forthcoming national elections as February 17, 2007, and inviting the United States Government to send an official observation mission for the event. Post requests the Department's consideration of this invitation. END SUMMARY.

¶3. The diplomatic note reads as follows:

BEGIN TEXT:

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Lesotho presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and has the honour to inform the latter that the General Elections of the Kingdom of Lesotho will be held on the 17th February, 2007.

The Government of the Kingdom of Lesotho kindly requests the Government of the United States of America to send an observer mission during the elections.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Lesotho avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America assurances of its highest consideration.

END TEXT.

¶4. COMMENT: Embassy Maseru is organizing a broad internal U.S. mission team, drawing on possible TDY support from Gaborone and Pretoria, to observe, monitor, and assess events related to polling on February 17. A high-level, experienced official observation team from Washington, however, would send a strong message that the United States views the National Assembly election as a critical step in the democratization process in Lesotho and throughout the SADC region.

¶5. Action request: We encourage consultation within the Department (e.g. AF, DRL, etc.) and with appropriate USG entities, including Congress, with a view to forming a possible election observation delegation. Post would appreciate action and views as soon as possible due to the short election timeframe. Thanks and regards. END COMMENT.

PERRY